

Research Topics & Ideas: Business and Management

About this document

This PDF contains 50 **business and management research topics** for dissertations and theses, organized into 10 areas of business and management, from customer experience and service quality to supply chain and operations management. Each topic is written as a researchable question and linked to a completed dissertation (2022–2026, 24 universities), so you can see how it was studied in practice. Use it to shortlist business and management dissertation topics and thesis ideas, then narrow one down to your own population, setting and timeframe.

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Customer experience and service quality

1. Does continuous improvement retain customers, or only make the process feel busier?

See it in a real dissertation: [Customer retention through the equal incorporation of continuous improvement\(CI\), culture and customer service](#) · Barbara McCrory · Edinburgh Napier University · 2026

2. What does a bank have to do to keep a small business as a customer?

See it in a real dissertation: [Effective Strategies Used by Trinidad and Tobago Financial Institution Leaders To Attract and Retain Small Businesses as Customers](#) · Seaman, Billy Brian · Walden University · 2024

3. Is a CRM system worth its cost to a small firm, measured in retention rather than in data?

See it in a real dissertation: [The impact of customer relationship management on customer loyalty and customer retention within UK-based SMEs in the beauty industry: a case study of Panache Beauty](#) · Jha, Suprim · University of the West of Scotland · 2025

4. What keeps a subscriber renewing once the novelty of the first delivery has gone?

See it in a real dissertation: [Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the subscription-based services: UK beauty sector](#) · Nguyen, Ngoc Phuong Thao · University of the West of Scotland · 2025

5. How do people buy groceries online when the products they want are not the standard range?

See it in a real dissertation: [A study of ethnic consumer online buying behaviour of groceries](#) · Shamim Ahmed · University of the West of Scotland · 2026

Diversity, equity and inclusion at work

6. What is inclusive leadership, stated as behaviors you could observe and count?

See it in a real dissertation: [Clarifying and Measuring Inclusive Leadership](#) · Kelly Hamilton · Portland State University · 2022

7. Do minority staff in a large public agency feel included, and does representation explain it?

See it in a real dissertation: [Perception of Inclusion Among Minority Civilian Personnel Within the Military Departments and Defense Agencies of the Department of Defense](#) · René Moreno · San Jose State University · 2022

8. Which barriers to advancement do women name, and how do the ones who get past them do it?

See it in a real dissertation: [Climbing through gender workplace bias: exploring how women navigate barriers to career advancement](#) · Berica Askew-Breier · Temple University · 2026

9. Does leadership training change anything for women in administrative roles?

See it in a real dissertation: [Empowering Her Path: Examining the Impact of Leadership Training on Women Staff in Higher Education Institutions](#) · Jennifer Bari · University of Virginia · 2026

10. What has to change in an organization before women's leadership behaviors read as leadership?

See it in a real dissertation: [Cultivation of professional leadership behaviors in women](#) · Kyla A. Stripling · Northeastern University · 2023

Employee engagement, retention and wellbeing

11. Who leaves after being passed over for promotion, and what makes the rest stay?

See it in a real dissertation: [Promotion Denied! How Promotion Denial Impacts Turnover For Nonpromoted Employees](#) · Michael Hay · Louisiana State University · 2022

12. Does job insecurity make people withdraw discretionary effort, or does support offset it?

See it in a real dissertation: [Exploring the Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Justice In the Relationship Between Type of Job Insecurity and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors](#) · Ziyi Zhai · San Jose State University · 2026

13. Which combination of cognitive ability and personality predicts counterproductive behavior at work?

See it in a real dissertation: [The Moderating Role of Personality in the Relationship Between Cognitive Ability and Counterproductive Work Behaviors](#) · Sarah Jacobsen · Illinois State University · 2025

14. What makes a candidate under stress find one employer more attractive than another?

See it in a real dissertation: [Impact of Proactive Personality and Self-Esteem on Organizational Attraction](#) · Angela Hua · San Francisco State University · 2022

15. After a public protest, how does a firm's reputation change who applies and who stays?

See it in a real dissertation: [Popular Protest and Corporate Reputation: Exploring the Impact on Recruitment and Retention](#) · Heather Miller · University of Southern Mississippi · 2026

Entrepreneurship and small business

16. What does a mid-sized city's entrepreneurship ecosystem actually offer a first-time founder?

See it in a real dissertation: [Evaluating the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Stockton, California](#) · Angelina Abella · San Jose State University · 2022

17. Can entrepreneurial nonconformity be measured, or is it only ever described afterwards?

See it in a real dissertation: [Nonconforming behaviors in entrepreneurship: Theoretical foundations, scale development, and empirical testing](#) · Carlos David Valladares Terán · Iowa State University · 2023

18. How would you score one city's entrepreneurship ecosystem against another's?

See it in a real dissertation: [Developing an Assessment Model for Entrepreneurship Ecosystems Using Hierarchical Decision Model: Case Study of Riyadh City](#) · Mustafa Almuzel · Portland State University · 2022

19. Where do firms that keep growing choose to locate, and does place explain any of it?

See it in a real dissertation: [Entrepreneurship and the Spatial Context: Evidence on the Location of Continuing Entrepreneurial Activity in Scotland](#) · Andrew Ross · Edinburgh Napier University · 2026

20. Which resource strategies keep a small enterprise alive past its first few years?

See it in a real dissertation: [Effective Strategies for Small and Mid-Sized Enterprises to Leverage Resources and Sustain Operations](#) · Priscilla Neri Rebibis Barbero · Walden University · 2026

Ethics, governance and corporate responsibility

21. What changes inside a firm once environmental and social measures start being reported?

See it in a real dissertation: [An Examination of the Underlying Implications of Environmental, Social, and Governance Measures on Firm Practices](#) · Lewis James Hardway · West Virginia University · 2024

22. Do shareholders believe the corporate governance rules their bank says it follows?

See it in a real dissertation: [Shareholders perception on corporate governance implementation in Nigerian commercial banks](#) · Eze, Casmir Chukwunonso · University of the West of Scotland · 2025

23. When does organizational loyalty tip into unethical behavior on the employer's behalf?

See it in a real dissertation: [The Moderating Effect of Organizational Identification and Supervisor's Organizational Embodiment on Unethical Pro- Organizational Behavior](#) · Taylor Flinn · Illinois State University · 2024

24. Do corporate climate targets translate into emissions that actually fall?

See it in a real dissertation: [Corporate Decarbonization and Climate Change Mitigation](#) · Angelyn Fairchild · University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill · 2024

25. Which level of greenwashing do shoppers notice, and which do they forgive?

See it in a real dissertation: [Fashion Consumers Response to Firm, Vicarious, Product, and Service Level Greenwashing: A Multi-group Structural Equation Modeling Approach](#) · Md. Nazmul Haque · Louisiana State University · 2025

Innovation, digital transformation and technology adoption

26. What predicts whether someone entering the workforce will adopt an AI tool at all?

See it in a real dissertation: [Understanding Students' Attitudes Toward Adopting Artificial Intelligence Technologies](#) · Russell Mulligan · Purdue University · 2026

27. Why do small manufacturers stall on IoT adoption when the business case looks obvious?

See it in a real dissertation: [IoT adoption in SME manufacturers in Thailand](#) · Yose Wungcharoen · Swansea University · 2022

28. Who gains when a firm redeploys its inventors between business units?

See it in a real dissertation: [Essays on Human Capital Redeployment](#) · K Kim · University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill · 2024

29. Will a patient use a visual analytics tool to make a medical decision, and what stops them?

See it in a real dissertation: [Factors Influencing User Experience and Consumer Behavioral Intention to Use Visual Analytics Technology](#) · Paulette Lewis · University of North Texas · 2022

30. Why do most digital transformation projects fail, according to the managers who ran them?

See it in a real dissertation: [Reasons for Digital Transformation Project Failures Based on U.S. Project Managers' Lived Experiences](#) · Susan Landes · Walden University · 2026

Leadership and organizational culture

31. Does a safety-first operating philosophy actually turn a company into a learning organization?

See it in a real dissertation: [Assessment of Efficacy of Human and Organizational Performance Methodology at a Large Biopharma Company](#) · CHRISTOPHER MASTRANGELO · Harvard University · 2026

32. What does asking a colleague for advice cost you in how competent you appear?

See it in a real dissertation: [Seeking Advice in the Workplace: Attributions to Competence, Credit, and Collaboration](#) · Donovan Scott Rowsey · University of Chicago · 2022

33. Which leader behaviors actually move employee engagement, rather than being reported as doing so?

See it in a real dissertation: [Leaders' Influence on Organizational Culture and Employee Engagement](#) · Georgene M Grattan · Walden University · 2026

34. What happens to job satisfaction when a sales floor is run on KPIs alone?

See it in a real dissertation: [KPI driven banking sales: Challenges in enhancing job satisfaction from managers' perspective](#) · Johnson, Deloris Olga · Edinburgh Napier University · 2025

35. Do the classic measures of workplace deviance still capture what people do through a screen?

See it in a real dissertation: [Analyzing deviant workplace behaviors: a comparative study of new and traditional scales](#) · Kyle Stephens · Temple University · 2026

Nonprofit and public sector management

36. How would you measure efficiency in a nonprofit that answers to its donors' preferences?

See it in a real dissertation: [Essays on the Rationale, Behavior, and Efficiency of Nonprofit Organizations](#) · Yumiao Wang · University of Virginia · 2026

37. What happens when a nonprofit leader is trained in a manufacturing improvement method?

See it in a real dissertation: [Nonprofit Leader Experiences in Sector-bending After Lean Six Sigma Training: Tension, Concepts, and Changed Behaviors](#) · Beverly Codallos · University of San Diego · 2024

38. Does publicly naming a volunteer bring more people in, or put them off?

See it in a real dissertation: [Volunteer Spotlighting: Costly Signaling to Promote Volunteerism](#) · Raible, Clyde A, V · University of Southern Mississippi · 2026

39. Who counts as a philanthropist, and what does that definition leave out?

See it in a real dissertation: [Helmets Off: An Exploratory Investigation into the Philanthropic Activity of Black NFL Players](#) · Eugena Anderson · University of San Diego · 2022

40. Why do business schools form international alliances, and what keeps one alive?

See it in a real dissertation: [An analysis of EHEA Business School approaches to the development, configuration and management of international academic alliances](#) · Patrick Harte · Edinburgh Napier University · 2026

Project management and delivery

41. Which project management failures actually cause the delays on infrastructure work?

See it in a real dissertation: [Strategic Project Management Challenges in Implementation of Transportation Infrastructure Projects](#) · Ibrahim Mohammed · Purdue University · 2025

42. Does a governance framework prevent project failure, or only document it afterwards?

See it in a real dissertation: [The Role of Governance Frameworks in Preventing Project Failure: Lessons Learned for Business Transformation](#) · Mohamad-Zouheir Ibrahim Chouman · Arden University · 2025

43. Would a shared ledger fix the quality records that go missing between highway contractors?

See it in a real dissertation: [Governance Framework for Optimizing Quality Management Processes in Highway Construction Through Blockchain Integration](#) · Lane, Steven Phillip · Purdue University · 2025

44. What makes a business case that survives contact with the thing it funded?

See it in a real dissertation: [Towards Better Business Cases](#) · Joseph Christopher Flanagan · Swansea University · 2023

45. How should a municipality measure whether its construction program is working?

See it in a real dissertation: [Developing a performance measurement framework for municipal construction projects in Saudi Arabia](#) · Saleh Alsulamy · Edinburgh Napier University · 2026

Supply chain and operations management

46. How does a produce buyer decide when prices, trade rules and demand are all moving at once?

See it in a real dissertation: [Adapting to Uncertainty: Strategic Decision Making in the Fresh Produce Supply Chain Under Fluctuating Market Conditions](#) · Kelly, Jacqueline · University of South Florida · 2025

47. What separates a mature procurement function from one that just places orders?

See it in a real dissertation: [A critical examination of the maturity stages of strategic procurement development in select organisations in Jamaica](#) · Angus, Flo Celia · Edinburgh Napier University · 2025

48. Can a discharge reminder move a hospital's throughput, or only its paperwork?

See it in a real dissertation: [Enhancing Hospital Throughput with the Power of Reminders](#) · Jessie Ventura · San Jose State University · 2025

49. Where should a flexible worker be placed when demand is uneven across a healthcare system?

See it in a real dissertation: [Optimal Allocation of Flexible Servers in Healthcare Systems](#) · Tong Zhang · Clemson University · 2026

50. Whose interests win when a hospital optimizes for efficiency and for patients at the same time?

See it in a real dissertation: [Responsive Hospital: Using Sensing & Responding Systems to Maximize the Interests of Multiple Stakeholders Considering Future Uncertainty in the environmental conditions](#) · Jiaqi Suo · Purdue University · 2026

How to turn a topic into your research question

A topic is a starting point, not something you can research yet. These four steps take you from a topic on this list to a focused question you can actually answer.

- 1. Shortlist three, not one.** Pick three topics from this list that genuinely interest you and fit the access you have to people and data.

Recommended reading: [How to find and choose a dissertation topic](#)

- 2. Read the dissertation behind each one.** Its literature review and its "recommendations for future research" section show you what is already known and what is still open.

Recommended reading: [How to find a research gap](#)

- 3. Narrow it to your setting.** Name one population, one setting and one thing you will measure or explore. That turns a broad topic into a question you can finish.

Recommended reading: [How to write a research question](#)

- 4. Line up your aims, objectives and questions.** Your committee will check that they agree.

Recommended reading: [Research aims, objectives and questions](#)

Work through these once and you will have a focused question rather than a broad topic, which is what the rest of your proposal is built on.